

Economy and Infrastructure

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**Service Plan
2025 – 2026**



The principal purpose of the Service is to:

Provide leadership to facilitate the delivery of Council Plan strategic outcomes to grow the local economy, address the climate emergency, support the health and wellbeing of our communities, protect and safeguard our natural capital, and ensure a supply of high quality, affordable housing. With a focus on enabling sustainable new development and investment, providing high quality services to our customers, protecting and improving our local environment and supporting inclusive economic growth, we will work in partnership with customers, businesses, communities, and our community planning partners to help realise the ambition and vision of the Council Plan.

The service leads projects within the following Council Plan Strategic Outcomes:

- Lead role in delivering Council Plan strategic outcomes on the local economy and climate emergency.
- Supporting role on health and wellbeing outcomes including public health protection and strategic housing.
- Customer facing services including Planning, Building Standards, Trading Standards, Environmental Health, Business Gateway, Strategic Housing and Housing Standards
- Strategic economic partnerships development and support, external funding

The service demonstrates the Council's Principles by:

Safeguard our Future

- Addressing the climate emergency through leading the development and delivery of the Climate Emergency Route Map and Action Plan.
- Protecting our natural capital through a range of countryside and environment projects, regulation of certain farming practices and private water supplies and through our Planning policies.
- Protecting our local environment through our controls on environmental nuisance and pollution and strategy to address vacant and derelict land.

Support our Citizens

- Delivery, through partnerships, of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to our people, places and our business communities.
- Work with our partners to protect citizens as consumers from harm arising from scams and unlawful trading activities.
- Protect our citizens from toxins in purchased food and private water supplies.
- Provide services through Business Gateway to support citizens to realise their potential as entrepreneurs.
- Digitise more of our services to increase their accessibility.

Support our Communities

- Support the development of local place plan initiatives led by local communities, and the development and delivery of community led projects.
- Work in partnership including through our strategic partnerships.

- Deliver the Communities & Place element of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund through the Place Planning Partnership.
- Support delivery of place-based economic development projects and Place Plans.
- Empower individuals to make informed procurement decisions through our Trusted Trader scheme.
- Work in partnership with new businesses by giving them advice on how to trade legally and fairly.

Be a Responsive Council

- Maintain high standards through reviewing our customer charters and key customer-facing processes.
- Seek and act upon feedback from our customers
- Maintain sustainable finances through maximising opportunities to attract external funding.
- Make best use of resources by using internal resources as match funding to leverage additional project or programme-based funding and seeking best value across all areas of service delivery.
- Applying sound project and programme management structures in planning and delivering programmes and projects.
- Support informed economic development delivery through the supply of high-quality economic data, information, and analysis.

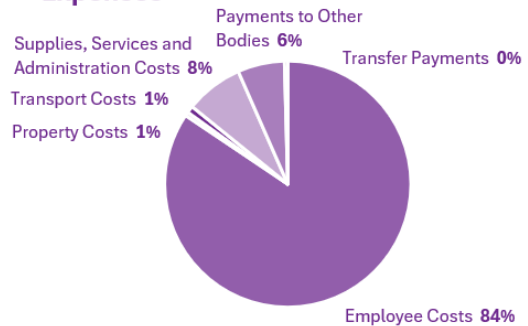
Resource Plan

The following resources underpin the delivery of the Service Plan:

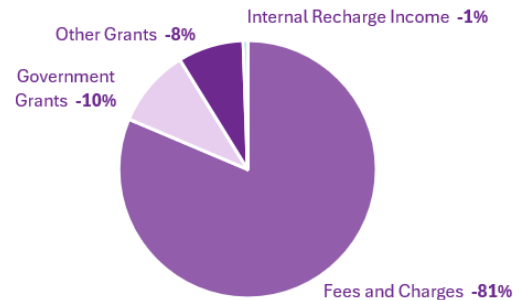
Budget:

Economy and Environment Budget Estimates Summary Service Analysis	Budget Estimates Economy and Environment £
Expense	
Employee Costs	6,133,806
Property Costs	36,753
Transport Costs	66,067
Supplies, Services and Administration Costs	550,471
Payments to Other Bodies	447,674
Transfer Payments	31,000
Expense Total	7,265,771
Income	
Fees and Charges	- 3,576,276
Government Grants	- 431,326
Other Grants	- 363,308
Internal Recharge Income	- 23,877
Income Total	- 4,394,787
Grand Total	2,870,984

Expenses



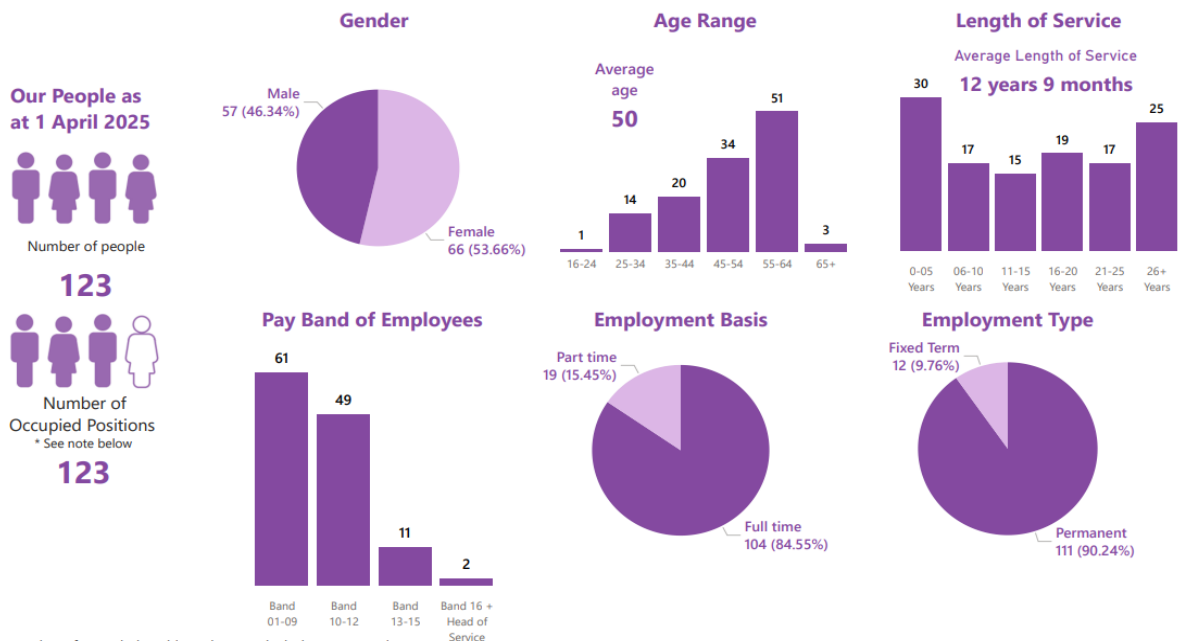
Income



Workforce:

Economy and Environment

Our People, Our Positions



* Please note number of occupied positions does not include any vacancies

Highlights of workforce engagement and planning in 2025/26:

The Community Protection Service, comprising Environmental Health and Trading Standards, has drafted a five-year People Plan, in consultation with staff. This has been an ongoing process since 2022 and has involved one-to-one sessions, development days and staff surveys. Trade Unions have also been consulted.

There will be an ongoing programme of staff development events focussed on supporting the local economy, including in-person development workshops and online webinars. This is a continuation of development activity from 2023/24 which covered topics including Place Planning, Green Economy and Employability.

A new programme of staff development events will be undertaken within the Planning and Development Service, starting with an in-person session at The Bridge in August. This will include practical workshops for both Development Management and Development Planning staff. Future sessions will include Strategic Housing and Building Standards.

Capacity and Resources

Areas of pressure have been identified in some services including Development Management and Community Protection which have experienced increased demands and capacity issues in the previous 12 months. The development and implementation of improvement action plans and People Plans will continue in these areas to support staff. Recruitment of qualified professional staff continues to be a challenge.

A number of posts within the economic development teams are funded from external sources. Internal funding through policy development funds including the Economic Recovery Fund set up during the COVID 19 response has concluded. Work has been undertaken to identify alternatives for the 2025/26 year to seek to minimise any 2025/26 budget pressure. The availability of these external funds needs to be kept under review in the coming year.

Economy and Environment Service Plan 2025/26 – all data will be recorded and reported through Pentana

Council Plan Delivery 2025/26

Strategic Outcome 1: There is a diversified and growing local economy that benefits all.

Delivery Plan Action	What team will do it?	Linked Strategy / Plan
MULTI YEAR - Deliver the current UK Shared Prosperity Fund Programme across the three investment priorities of Community and Place, Local Business and People and Skills by 31st March 2025.	Strategic Economic Investment	Regional Economic Strategy
CARRY FORWARD - Prepare the Regional Food Plan, building on the excellent work of the Dumfries and Galloway Sustainable Food Partnership and other stakeholders.	Strategic Economic Investment	Scottish Government Good Food Nation Act 2022
NEW – Deliver the action plan from the Food Standards Scotland Audit in October 2024.	Environmental Health	Food Law Code of Practice (Scotland) 2019 Joint Health Protection Plan

Strategic Outcome 3: Rural communities and places are vibrant and thriving

Delivery Plan Action	What team will do it?	Linked Strategy / Plan
MULTI YEAR - Work with communities in Gretna, Kirkconnel and Kelloholm, Stranraer, Whithorn and Wigtown to develop their Borderlands Place Plans and Town Investment Plans.	Strategic Economic Investment	Regional Economic Strategy Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal
MULTI YEAR – Help communities to develop local place plans and deliver their ambitions, through engagement and advice to communities with local partners	Strategic Economic Investment	Regional Economic Strategy
MULTI YEAR - Support the Dumfries Town Board to develop a Long Term Plan and 3-year investment plan for Dumfries.	Strategic Economic Investment	Regional Economic Strategy

		Dynamically Different Dumfries
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Strategic Outcome 4: Enhancing the region's natural capital benefits local communities and businesses

Delivery Plan Action	What team will do it?	Linked Strategy / Plan
MULTI YEAR - Implement the next phase of the Borderlands Natural Capital programme.	Environment Team	Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal/ Local Biodiversity Action Plan/ Regional Land Use Framework
MULTI YEAR - Develop new Strategic Landscape Projects in readiness for external funding bids.	Environment Team	Local Biodiversity Action Plan/ Regional Land Use Framework
MULTI YEAR - Prepare Local Biodiversity Plan.	Environment Team	Local Biodiversity Action Plan/ Regional Land Use Framework
MULTI YEAR - Revision of the Forest and Woodlands Strategy	Environment Team	Local Biodiversity Action Plan/ Regional Land Use Framework
NEW - Develop a Local Power Plan to increase local clean power generation and support community owned energy projects, and that a paper will be brought to Economy and Infrastructure Committee as soon as practicable.	Environment Team	Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy/ Climate Emergency action Plan/ Strategic Route Map to Net Zero

Strategic Outcome 5: Businesses are supported to start and grow

Delivery Plan Action	What team will do it?	Linked Strategy / Plan
MULTI YEAR - Progress the Borderlands Business Infrastructure investment programme, advance detailed site appraisals and Final Business Cases for funding approval.	Strategic Economic Investment	Regional Economic Strategy Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal
MULTI YEAR - Continue to deliver an e-commerce support programme to 25 businesses to help them get online and benefit from new customer opportunities.	Business Gateway	Regional Economic Strategy
MULTI YEAR - Continue to support 50 local businesses with the costs of doing business though providing funding from the Climate Resilience Fund.	Business Gateway	Regional Economic Strategy

NEW - Prepare a report with proposals to support businesses across the region, with a particular focus on the tourism sector.	Strategic Economic Investment	Regional Economic Strategy South of Scotland Responsible Tourism Strategy
NEW - Submit an expression of interest for Chapelcross to the UK Government's AI Growth Zone bidding process.	Strategic Economic Investment	Regional Economic Strategy
NEW - Review and make recommendations for the best use of Council's industrial property portfolio, including income generation, condition surveys, maintenance schedules and investment.	Strategic Economic Investment	Regional Economic Strategy

Strategic Outcome 6: Investment in the region benefits communities and the local economy

Delivery Plan Action	What team will do it?	Linked Strategy / Plan
MULTI YEAR - As part of the UK Levelling Up Fund programme, Reactivating Galloway, support project delivery with community project lead organisations for the Stranraer Water Sports Hub and Dalbeattie Rocks and Wheels project and advance delivery of the regeneration of The George, Stranraer	Strategic Economic Investment	Regional Economic Strategy South of Scotland Responsible Tourism Strategy
MULTI YEAR - As part of the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal, conclude the Full Business Case and obtain funder approvals for the delivery of the Stranraer Marina expansion project.	Strategic Economic Investment	Regional Economic Strategy Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal
MULTI YEAR - Secure future funding from the Scottish Government Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (RCGF) and support project delivery with the community lead organisation for the RCGF supported Lockerbie Old School.	Strategic Economic Investment	Regional Economic Strategy
MULTI YEAR - As part of the UK Levelling Up Fund programme, Three Rivers Active Tourism, support the development of the Annan Harbour regeneration scheme and its project lead the Annan Harbour Action Group	Strategic Economic Investment	Regional Economic Strategy South of Scotland Responsible Tourism Strategy
MULTI YEAR - Progress Local Development Plan 3 including housing needs assessment and transport appraisal.	Development Planning team	Local Development Plan
MULTI YEAR - Implement the actions in the Vacant and Derelict Land and Property strategy.	Strategic Housing & Regeneration Investment Team	Vacant and Derelict Land and Property Strategy

Strategic Outcome 7: Roads, footpaths, cycling and walking networks in the region are communities and places are vibrant and thriving

Delivery Plan Action	What team will do it?	Linked Strategy / Plan
MULTI YEAR - Work with the A75/A77 Action Groups, UK and Scottish Governments on the feasibility work to develop a business case for further investment in these strategic roads - Year 2.	Head of Economy and Environment	
NEW - Report to update members on the work of the A75/A77 lobbying group and request that Officers include an option for a potential joint STAG Appraisal with South Ayrshire Council.	Head of Economy and Environment	
MULTI YEAR - Periodic Review of the Dumfries and Galloway Core Paths Plan.	Environment Team	Core Paths Plan / Access Strategy

Strategic Outcome 10: The Council is a low carbon organisation

Delivery Plan Action	What team will do it?	Linked Strategy / Plan
MULTI YEAR - Work with partners to identify and progress opportunities for district heating solutions focusing on Dumfries and Stranraer initially.	Environment Team	Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy/ Climate Emergency action Plan/ Strategic Route Map to Net Zero
NEW - Explore opportunities to install Photovoltaics on appropriate Council sites for local renewable energy generation. Bring forward additional projects using our estimated £1.5m share of the Scottish Government Climate Emergency funding commitment.	Environment Team	

Strategic Outcome 19: Prevention and early intervention assist people to have independent lives.

Delivery Plan Action	What team will do it?	Linked Strategy / Plan
NEW - Work with partners to deliver the 2024-2026 Joint Health Protection Plan	Community Protection	Joint Health Protection Plan

Strategic Outcome 21: People are active, resilient and improving their health and wellbeing.

Delivery Plan Action	What team will do it?	Linked Strategy / Plan
NEW - Deliver a programme of underage test purchasing from tobacco and vape retailers	Trading Standards	Joint Health Protection Plan Creating a tobacco-free generation: A Tobacco Control Strategy for Scotland

Strategic Outcome 23: Investment in the region benefits communities and the local economy

Delivery Plan Action	What team will do it?	Linked Strategy / Plan
MULTI YEAR - Support partners in delivering the commitment in the Affordable Housing Supply Programme in Dumfries and Galloway.	Strategic Housing & Regeneration Investment Team	Local Housing Strategy
MULTI YEAR - Work in partnership with the local community and Wheatley Homes South to support wholesale regeneration of the Lochside area.	Strategic Housing & Regeneration Investment Team	Local Housing Strategy
MULTI YEAR - Preparation of the Local Housing Strategy.	Strategic Housing & Regeneration Investment Team	Local Housing Strategy

MULTI YEAR - Redevelop on site at Thistle Grove, Collin – progress the project to the main works contract tender stage (implement the decision via Project Implementation Plan, conduct further formal engagement and consultation).	Housing Standards Team	Local Housing Strategy
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Service Delivery 2025/26

What are we planning to do?	What team will do it?	Linked Strategy / Plan
MULTI YEAR - Community Protection Delivery of Animal Feeds Official Controls.	Trading Standards	Official Control Regulations, as adopted by Scottish law. Trading Standards team plan
MULTI YEAR - Delivery of the Joint Health Protection Plan.	Environmental Health	Joint Health Protection Plan Environmental Health team plan. Council Plan – Health and Wellbeing
MULTI YEAR - Delivery of the Gull Management Plan.	Environmental Health	Council Plan – Support our communities; Focus on local and place
MULTI YEAR - Development and delivery of the Food Law service plan.	Environmental Health	Council Plan – Be a responsive Council; Maintain high standards. Food Law service plan.
MULTI YEAR - Delivery of the Animal Health and Welfare Framework.	Trading Standards	Council Plan – Economy; Rural communities are vibrant and thriving. Scottish Animal Health and Welfare Framework.

Change and Improvement Activities 2025/26

What are we planning to do what is the intended outcome?	What team will do it?	Linked Strategy / Plan
CARRY FORWARD - Community Protection Transformation: Database replacement.	Community Protection	Council Plan – Be a responsive Council; Be organised to deliver
NEW - Carry out a review of our Pest Control services to improve response times and ensure cost recovery	Environmental Health	Joint Health Protection Plan

Economy and Environment Success Measures 2025/26

Measures

Success Measure	Target	Timescale / Frequency	Benchmark
Percentage of young people who start-up businesses	15%	Annual	Internal
The average time (weeks) to deal with major development planning applications	35	Annual	Internal
The average time (weeks) to deal with local development planning applications	12	Annual	Internal
The average time (weeks) to deal with householder development planning applications	8	Annual	Internal
Percentage of Building Warrant applications responded to within 20 days	60%	Quarterly	Internal
Percentage of completion certificates responded to within 10 working days	95%	Quarterly	Internal
The percentage customer satisfaction rating for Development Management	75%	Annual	Internal
Customer satisfaction rating for Building Standards	75%	Annual	Internal
Number of farms checked to ensure legal compliance in their trading activities.	40	Quarterly	Internal

Community Protection – The Number of Export Health Certificates Issued	150	Quarterly	Internal
Total number of Traders on the Trusted Trader Scheme	180	Annual	Internal and External
The number of food businesses inspected by Environmental Health Annually	300	Quarterly	Internal
Reduce the backlog of food business inspections from 1397 to 1300 (target is number remaining)	1300	Quarterly	Internal
Reduce the backlog of new food business registrations from 439 to 200 (target is number remaining)	200	Quarterly	Internal
The Number of businesses inspected by Trading Standards Annually	271	Quarterly	Internal
The number of underage test purchases from tobacco and vape retailers	4	Quarterly	Internal
The number of new, small and medium sized businesses identified given advice and supported by Trading Standards and Environmental Health to ensure legal compliance in their trading activities	100	Quarterly	Internal
Community Protection – The Number of Animal Feed Inspections	147	Quarterly	Internal
Community Protection – Food Hygiene Information Scheme Passes	75%	Quarterly	Internal
Environmental Health - Safety and Public Health inspections	150	Quarterly	Internal
Customer Satisfaction rating for Environmental Health	80%	Annual	Internal
Customer Satisfaction rating for Trading Standards	80%	Annual	Internal
The number of Private water supplies risk assessed	330	Quarterly	Internal and External
The number of samples taken from regulated private water supplies	534	Quarterly	Internal and External
The percentage of failed water samples followed up	90%	Quarterly	Internal
Community Protection – Food Sampling	100	Quarterly	Internal
Community Protection – Sustainability of Private Water Supplies	16	Quarterly	Internal
Percentage of HMO licence applications processed within twelve months which is a statutory requirement	100%	Monthly	Internal
Percentage of Short Term Let Licences issued to new hosts within 9 months of application	100%	Monthly	Internal
Percentage of Short Term Let Licences issued to existing hosts within 12 months of application	100%	Monthly	Internal
Percentage of Gypsy/Travellers surveyed in relation to the Councils management of the site	80%	Annual	Internal

Council Wide Indicators

Success Measure	Target	Timescale / Frequency	Benchmark
People			
The average number of days lost per all other (non-teacher) local government employees through sickness absence	9 days	Monthly	Internal / External: LGBF
Percentage of days lost per employee through sickness absence as a percentage of total possible attendances	4%	Monthly	Internal
Percentage of staff who have completed an appraisal in the last 12 months	95%	Monthly	Internal
Enquiries / Complaints			
Percentage of Elected Member enquiries dealt with through the Elected Members Enquiry Service within the agreed timescales	85%	Quarterly	Internal / External: Local Authority Complaint Handling Network
Percentage of Community Council enquiries dealt with through the Community Council Enquiry Service within the agreed timescale.	85%	Quarterly	Internal
Percentage of MP/MSP enquiries dealt with through the Enquiry Service within agreed timescale	85%	Quarterly	Internal
Percentage of Youth Councillor enquiries dealt with through the Enquiry Service within the agreed timescale	85%	Quarterly	Internal
Percentage of Stage 1 complaint responses issued within statutory timescales	80%	Monthly	Internal / External: Local Authority Complaint Handling Network
Percentage of Stage 1 complaint responses where extension was authorised	Data only	Monthly	Internal / External: Local Authority Complaint Handling Network
Percentage of Stage 2 complaint responses issued within statutory timescales	80%	Monthly	Internal / External: Local Authority Complaint Handling Network
Percentage of Stage 2 complaint responses where extension was authorised	Data only	Monthly	Internal / External: Local Authority

			Complaint Handling Network
Percentage of Freedom of Information and Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations requests received that have been responded to within 20 working days of receipt	90%	Monthly	Internal/External
Percentage of requests for subject access requests completed within one month	85%	Monthly	Internal
Finance			
Revenue Budget Outturn - Projected Outturn as a % of Budget	100%	Quarterly	Internal
Health and Safety			
Number of Head of Service Safety Visits	2	Six Monthly	Internal
Total Number Significant Health and Safety Risk Priorities with Actions Overdue	0	Six Monthly	Internal
Total Number HSE/SFRS Interfaces resulting in legal enforcement action	0	Six Monthly	Internal
Number of HSE/SFRS Interfaces with actions overdue	0	Six Monthly	Internal
Number of RIDDOR reportable incidents outside of HSE legal reporting timescales	0	Six Monthly	Internal
Number of Serious Incident Investigation Reports Overdue	0	Six Monthly	Internal
Total Number of Serious Incident Reports with actions overdue	0	Six Monthly	Internal
Number of RIDDOR Reportable Dangerous Occurrences, Employee Injuries and Diseases	0	Six Monthly	Internal
Number of 3rd Party RIDDOR incidents	0	Six Monthly	Internal
Number of Reported Near Misses	Data only	Six Monthly	Internal
Number of Employee Reported Accidents	Data only	Six Monthly	Internal
Number of Reported Violent Incidents to Employees	Data only	Six Monthly	Internal

Local Government Benchmarking Framework Indicators

Success Measure	Target	Timescale / Frequency	Benchmark
Cost of planning and building standards per planning application	Data only	Annual	Internal / External: LGBF
Average time per business and industry planning application (weeks)	Data only	Annual	Internal / External: LGBF
Number of business gateway start-ups per 10,000 population	Data only	Annual	Internal / External: LGBF
Investment in Economic Development and Tourism per 1,000 population	Data only	Annual	Internal / External: LGBF
Proportion of Properties receiving superfast broadband	Data only	Annual	Internal / External: LGBF
Town Vacancy Rates	Data only	Annual	Internal / External: LGBF
Immediately available employment land as a % of total land allocated for employment purposes	Data only	Annual	Internal / External: LGBF
Gross Value Added (GVA) per capita	Data only	Annual	Internal / External: LGBF
CO2 emissions area wide per capita	Data only	Annual	Internal / External: LGBF
CO2 emissions area wide - emissions within scope of local authority per capita	Data only	Annual	Internal / External: LGBF
CO2 emissions from Transport per capita	Data only	Annual	Internal / External: LGBF
CO2 emissions from Electricity per capita	Data only	Annual	Internal / External: LGBF
CO2 emissions from Natural Gas per capita	Data only	Annual	Internal / External: LGBF
Cost of trading standards and environmental health per 1,000 population	Data only	Annual	Internal External – LGBF
Cost of trading standards, money advice and citizens advice per 1,000 population	Data only	Annual	Internal / External: LGBF
Cost of environmental health per 1,000 population	Data only	Annual	Internal / External: LGBF

Economy and Environment Risk Register

Risk	Risk Factors	Mitigation / Contingency
Reduced ability to support the delivery of affordable homes within the region	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduction in Scottish Government funding for affordable housing. 2. Delays in the planning process. 3. Shortage of construction materials and workforce. 4. Additional financial constraints on development partners, including rising costs of borrowing and reduced revenue income due to recent legislative requirements. 	<p>Mitigation Plan</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development Forum continues proactive approach to identifying future development opportunities and resolving barriers to delivery. 2. Strategic Housing Investment Plan Annual Review. <p>Contingency Plan</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Seek new development opportunities in areas of housing demand. 2. Regular communication with the Scottish Government to ensure that new projects can be brought into the Plan. 3. Identify additional funding opportunities to support strategic developments.
Failure to balance the revenue budget in the context of reducing income	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Under recovery of fees and charges. 2. Failure to control expenditure. 	<p>Mitigation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhanced budget monitoring at departmental and service level. 2. Apply corrective measures to control expenditure when required.
Failure to deliver our lead role in building the local economy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Insufficient officer and funding capacity to support our lead role. 2. Less than robust Project Planning and Business Case Development to inform capital investment decision making. 3. Project outcomes and benefits not met. 	<p>Mitigation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maximise the use of external funding. 2. Utilise consultancy services to bolster peak demands of workload and strengthen Project Management.

	<p>4. Negative national/international economic factors outwith our control.</p>	<p>3. Ensuring resources are targeted to support Council Plan Strategic Outcomes</p> <p>4. Ensure all capital investment decisions are informed by robust Business Cases.</p> <p>5. Robust evaluation of project outcomes and benefits following through on Business Case delivery.</p> <p>6. Maximise opportunities arising from the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal projects and programmes, Scottish Government regeneration funding and UK Levelling Up Fund projects and work with partners through the Regional Economic Partnership including South of Scotland Enterprise and South of Scotland Destination Alliance.</p>
<p>Failure to deliver critical / essential services</p>	<p>1. Loss of staff</p> <p>2. Loss of IT / telephony</p> <p>3. Loss of power / utility</p> <p>4. Loss of transport / fuel</p> <p>5. Loss of provider / supplier</p> <p>6. Loss of access to buildings</p>	<p>Mitigation</p> <p>1. Development of People Plans</p> <p>2. Remote / home working</p> <p>3. Use of MS Teams</p> <p>4. Contractual terms with suppliers</p> <p>5. Use of external contractors</p> <p>Contingency Plan</p> <p>1. All essential contact details kept in central location.</p> <p>2. Paper copies of contact details kept.</p> <p>3. Animal Health vans kept stocked with emergency supplies and key retained by officers.</p>